

III. Planning Process

The Budget Act of 2002 passed by DC City Council required that a Draft Master Plan be completed for Public Reservation 13. This plan was required before any Capital Improvement funds could be expended for DC General or for improvements to DC Jail facilities. The U.S. Congress approved the budget and the planning requirement and added a mandate that the plan be completed by March 31, 2002.

Participatory Planning and Public Outreach

This planning effort constituted the first time in the history of this site that a plan was created with community input and participation. Though completed in a highly compressed and aggressive timeline, significant opportunities for public input and review were included. Public input contributed to the evolution of the plan and was essential in adjusting the plan to make sure sufficient land resources are available for various needs and uses anticipated by community members.

Three public meetings, an intensive 3-day planning workshop, and a weekend review session were offered for community participation. Meetings were held both on weeknights and weekends to provide the maximum opportunity for the majority of interested citizens to attend one or more session(s) depending on their daily schedules.

Over 300 people participated representing a broad range of stakeholders. Many participants were immediate neighbors to the site living on Massachusetts Avenue, Bay or Burke Streets. A good majority came from other parts of the Hill East neighborhood or Capitol Hill. Other participants were drawn from across the city, but active in health care advocacy. Nearly one quarter of participants attended every meeting offered – over a 20 hour commitment each!

The first meeting was held the evening of Wednesday, January 23 at the DC Armory. Nearly 200 people attended this first meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to establish the planning process and timeline, introduce the team, and outline the end products of the Draft Master Plan.

A second meeting was held the evening of Wednesday, February 20 at the DC Armory. This meeting provided participants with the critical

background information and existing site conditions they needed to know to prepare for the planning workshop.

A 3-day participatory planning workshop was held over the weekend of March 1-3. The workshop began with a guided site tour of Reservation 13 on Friday, March 1. Saturday March 2 was an all day work session where participants worked in small groups concentrating on different issues that had to be addressed in the Draft Master Plan. These topics included transportation, parkland and public space, site character, general land uses, and defining the health care needs for the site. Groups worked on draft site plans to illustrate their priorities for the site. Sunday, March 3, project consultants condensed citizen and government input and outlined a set of principles that would guide future reuse of the site.

The morning of Saturday, March 16, a follow-up public review session was held to introduce the Illustrative Site Plan that evolved from the Guiding Principles and to obtain public reactions to the draft of the final product.

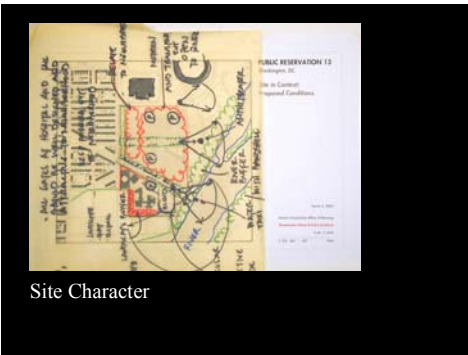
The final Draft Master Plan was presented at a final public meeting on the evening of March 20th. This meeting went over the complete process, the guiding principles, and the Illustrative Plan. The purpose of the meeting was to clarify the plan and answer questions about the next steps in the planning process after completion of the Draft Plan.

Outreach was conducted through a variety of methods. The Office of Cable Television and Telecommunications – the public cable channel – covered every meeting and workshop in February and March. Notice of meetings were sent out by mail, email, fax, and phone. Fliers were distributed door to door and at community meetings. Announcements for major meetings were published in Washington Post articles.

A public website was established to increase community access to information on the site and the planning process. In addition, binders of all background information, notes from meetings, community comments, and site maps were available for those without Internet access to review current information. These were located near the site at Eastern High School and at the MLK Central Public Library in downtown. Information was updated regularly. The website address is located at: <http://www.publicspace.justicesustainability.com>.



Figure 9 - March 2, 2002- Community Workshop



Site Character

Figure 10 - Schematic Drawing from Community Workshop on March 2, 2002